-- Description of Schedule and Tasks --

As shown by the schedule, development work is currently being done on the Shield/ALERT program. **Logistics** covers the effort to support transition of ALERT operations and maintenance from contractor support to the Air Force. **Operator Efficiency** explores alternative ways to enhance the abilities of military operators to improve warning on infrared detectable events by improving their ability to discriminate real events from false alarms and reducing the time needed to release messages. **Mission Improvements** strive to extend the scope and enhance the quality of messages generated by the system. **Cross Cueing** involves the real-time interaction with various intelligence, radar-based and imagery systems to provide AFSPC with cueing information based on infrared observables and receive from them real-time sensor data that may be useful in refining event descriptions. **Additional Sources** evaluate real-time fusion of data with real-time space based infrared data. **Battlespace Characterization** evaluates battlefield situation in terms of relevant infrared observable events or threats to U.S. forces in that sector. **Mapping, Earth Imagery & Weather Imagery Component (MEIWIC)** data incorporates salient weather and terrain features into real-time operational displays to facilitate the operator's decision making.

The Shield/ALERT development will continue to pave the way for the follow-on SBIRS ground system. ALERT's motto is "In the Fight" and they will continue to be "In the Fight" until the SBIRS Increment 1 Initial Operation Capability has been achieved.

JTAGS

The U.S. Army and Navy Joint Tactical Ground Station (JTAGS) is capable of receiving data from DSP satellites directly in a combat area and has been operational since early 1997. JTAGS is also capable of relaying processed, real-time information through communications networks to forces within theater.

The JTAGS mission is to provide attack warnings to theater commanders so that appropriate firepower can be utilized to eliminate the immediate threat and to deter further aggression. JTAGS can be used by antimissile batteries to receive incoming missile warning messages and to point their radar systems in the proper direction.

Each JTAGS unit consists of three eight-foot antennas to receive satellite downlink information, one 8 X 8 X 20-foot processing & communications unit, one 60 kW generator and a HumVee.

The JTAGS system will be upgraded to accept data from the SBIRS satellites when they become operational in FY 2002.

JTAGS truly brings the benefits of satellite early warning to the soldier in the field .

An Army JTAGS unit capable of receiving data from DSP satellites is seen here.